The Sketch

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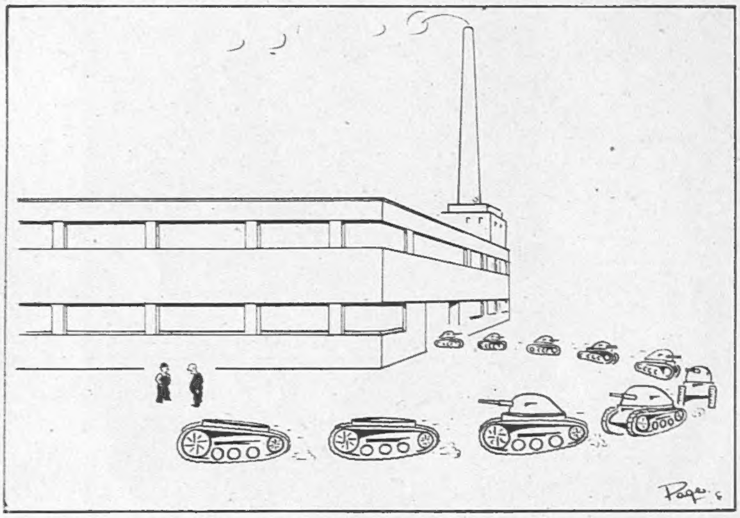
AT THE VIMY RIDGE MEMORIAL.

As Allied armies raced towards Belgium early this month, FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY *stood for a moment beneath the Canadian War Memorial at Vimy Ridge, north of Arras, recalling the glorious spirit of those troops who fought and fell on the Somme battlefields in 1917; who won and held the Ridge. The same magnificent spirit inspires our troops to-day.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Old and True. In the year 1809—no, I am not writing my reminiscences !—there was a Great Man who threatened to trample on the whole of Europe, including England.



" It seems Miss Jackson was late again this morning . . ."

DRAWN BY PAGE.

He had done most of the trampling already, and there seemed to be nothing to stop him doing the rest. He was a Führer, if ever there was one : he had a Grand Army, he led a Herrenvolk, and he was going to put all the Slave-Folk where they belonged. A middle-aged, somewhat sombre man of peace, named Wordsworth —he was a member of the Home Guard, by the way—wrote this about him :

Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid
His vows to Fortune ; who, in cruel slight
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made
By the blind Goddess—ruthless, undismayed ;
And so hath gained at length a prosperous height,
Round which the elements of worldly might
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless force !
Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,
Internal darkness and unquiet breath ;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate
By violent and ignominious death.

Decline and Fall. Written, please note, six years before Waterloo, when all the odds were against the poet and on the Great Man. But these staid, retiring men of letters sometimes have their intuitions no less remarkable than those of Little Corporals ; and obscure members of the Home Guard may possess a spirit which is capable of defeating, in the end, your Scarlet Sons of Mars. In one particular only did the poet-prophet prove wrong. The Adventurer died an ignominious but not a violent death. He withered away into oblivion. There was romantic talk about a Caged Eagle ; but a moulting caged eagle is not a very inspiring sight. The Conqueror lived and died with his thoughts. I cannot imagine a worse punishment. For such as him the most severe sentence is that which Shelley pronounced on the scribbler who killed Keats with a squirt of ink : " Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame ! "

The Island of the Damned. That is my plan for the trial of war criminals. I would not hang them or even shoot them—what payment is one sharp, obliterating moment for the anguish of millions ? I certainly would not go through the solemn but futile form of a " trial," the issue of which is a foregone conclusion. I should find an island—not too comfortable an island—and dump them there to enjoy each other's society for the rest of their miserable lives. Let them live and die with their own and each other's thoughts ; and if that won't be hell on earth for them, I can imagine none—and a just hell, too. I like to think of Hitler shut up for the term of his natural life with Laval, or Himmler with Quisling, or Goebbels with William Joyce. Vindictive ? Well, my vindictiveness does not run to blood. I think there is, and will be, quite enough blood running to waste, and it is an unimaginative sort of punishment. My plan combines justice with effectiveness. For that very reason, I dare say, the Peace Conference will not take much notice of it. However, I 've *told* them ; the rest is up to them !

Glory. I suppose it is a foolish question to ask, but would humanity have been better or worse if there had been no Great Men ? Who are the " great " ? Until this present age, they have all been soldiers. Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, Attila, Genghis Khan, Frederick the Great—these, who have inflicted untold misery, have been the heroes of history. It is the man of action—ruthless, devastating action—who has

" I *told* you not to touch it—now we shall *never* know what it was we found ! "

DRAWN BY SILENUS.

SALVAGE ALL YOUR OLD LETTERS—FOR VICTORY

always captured the imagination not only of the bold but of the gentle among mankind. In him the common man has seen himself magnified a thousandfold. "JOHNSON: 'Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea.' BOSWELL: 'Lord Mansfield does not.' JOHNSON: 'Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of general officers and admirals who have been in service, he would shrink; he'd wish to creep under the table.' BOSWELL: 'No, he'd think he could *try* them all.' JOHNSON: 'Yes, if he could catch them; but they'd try him much sooner. No, Sir; were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say, "Follow me, and hear a lecture in philosophy"; and Charles, laying his hand on his sword, to say, "Follow me, and dethrone the Czar"; a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates. Sir, the impression is universal; yet it is strange.'"

The Age of Windbags. Universal, but not so very strange; for man, being an animal (and I don't see any way of changing that, not even by an international conference), will always covet and admire animal courage. But the extraordinary thing which we have witnessed in our own age is that the Great Man has become the man of words, not of deeds. The past twenty-five years has been the Age of Windbags. Though they have nearly all seen something of the field of battle, none of the dictators has been a soldier on the grand scale. Hitler and Mussolini have swaggered about in a theatrical wardrobe of uniforms, and Hitler has been an intuitional Commander-in-Chief—with the result that all the real soldiers have tried to bump him off. These men have come to power by their capacity not to lead armies but to "move millions." Their chief weapon has been the Power of the Word. The radio is mightier than the sword. This, I confess, alarms me for the future of the race. I fear Great Men who are going about ravaging the earth, but I also fear Great Men who intoxicate multitudes to frenzy by talking at them and working up their hatred. In fact, I think the world is a little tired of Great Men. There is some consolation in being a Little Man.

Stand Easy. Meanwhile, they tell me—everybody tells me—that it is all over bar the shouting. For all I know, by the time these lines appear in print, even the shouting and the tumult will have died, though I rather think that the tumult will go on for some little time. I am temperamentally averse from counting chickens before they are hatched, but at all events there is plenty of warrant for allowing our thoughts to run on chickens and their charms. It is not quite "Dismiss" yet for the Home Guard and the Civil Defence, but at least it is "Stand easy"—and if you can't stand easy, stand as easy as you can. I don't know how the Home Guard will feel about it, but I think many of us Civil Defenders will miss the company of our comrades. These and all the other services of the Home Front have been marvellous democratic institutions. If war were not so foul and mad, it would be almost worth while having it for the sake of such national bracers.

"We soon find the men with really good eyesight!"

DRAWN BY APP.

P's and Queues. But the price is rather high, and we are all thinking of a condition of life in which there will be no shrieking sirens and no bellowed words of command. What do your thoughts turn to instinctively as the greatest boon of peace? Of course, it will be very jolly not to be "controlled" in every direction and to forget all about rations and points—but I fear that will not come for some time. If I were a woman, I should give thanks daily on my bended knees for not having to queue up for everything; but that boon may also be somewhat delayed, and I suspect that there will be quite a number of women who will feel that life is much duller without minding one's P's and queues, which are a high spot in social life and local "intelligence." The queue, I dare say, has been an admirable exercise in patience, but, as one who is not excessively endowed with that virtue, I have never appreciated its discipline. All the little patience I possess I have needed for that temperamental little devil, my pocket lighter, and one of the real joys of peace to which I look forward is being able to strike as many matches as I like without a guilty conscience.

From the Silver Grill. I find that a good many people's thoughts turn grossly to tender, red (or even blue) beefsteaks. I am surprised at the primitive carnivorous instincts which seem to have been intensified by five years of semi-vegetarian repressions. In my own dreams I do not see sanguinary steaks, but rather grilled-to-a-cinder chump chops. But I shall be content with simpler things, such as a potato which tastes like a potato and not like a bleeding piece of earth (if I may borrow from Marc Antony). On one thing I am resolved—only over my dead body will anyone introduce into my household a hake, a pollock or a cod. I am starting a movement (and am open to receive subscriptions) for sending tons of hake, pollock and cod to the starving peoples of Europe. I will sacrifice myself by taking only the lemon sole, the turbot and the lobster.

"I'll *not* have a daughter of mine accuse me of stealing her sweet ration!"

DRAWN BY S. B. BRETTELL.

[*Continued overleaf.*

And our Italian co-belligerents can have all my macaroni, too. I used to esteem it, but familiarity has bred contempt. Macaroni without *real* cheese is like an egg without salt or life without love.

The Vital Spark. They are keeping us rather on tenterhooks about this basic ration. Can it be that ere another moon has waxed and waned I shall sit again at the wheel of my car, and shall even be able to deviate from the "authorised route" without having the Flying Squad after me? I yearn for it. Unfortunately, however, petrol is of little use to a motorist without the vital spark, and a spark needs a battery. My battery has been in retirement for more than three years and is, I imagine, badly discouraged; and if the battery hath lost its electricity, wherewith shall it be electrified? There is another anxious question—out of practice as I am, shall I be any match for the Panzer divisions of jeeps? I fear that their shock tactics may be too much for me and that it may be a case of "From all these operations one of our motor-cars failed to return." And again, I suppose within a year or so

"Your last lot of oatmeal tasted of soap."
"Ah, that will be one coupon."

DRAWN BY SILENUS.

my 1938 car will look like a hansom cab beside the new models, which will fly and swim and climb towers as well as skim the surface of the earth. Never mind, I 'll be quite content to crawl along in my growler at sixty or so, if they will only let me have a battery.

Literary Slimming. I was looking the other day at a pre-war edition of a London daily, and could not believe (so short is memory) that such oodles of printed matter had ever existed— much less been turned out in hundreds of thousands at twopence per oodle. Fat papers or thin papers? I am not at all sure that I want my breakfast-table to groan again under those voluminous sheets. It seems to me that an emaciated paper gives all the news and views which anybody can reasonably want, and the slimming process has, on the whole, been good for the constitution. There is much to be said, too, for slim books. They fit into a pocket, whereas you never know where to put a fat novel on a railway journey, and therefore generally leave it behind. On the other hand, there is nothing whatever to be said for microscopic type and grey ink, and if it is a choice between *svelte* volumes and readable print, then by all means let us go back to the buxom proportions of yore.

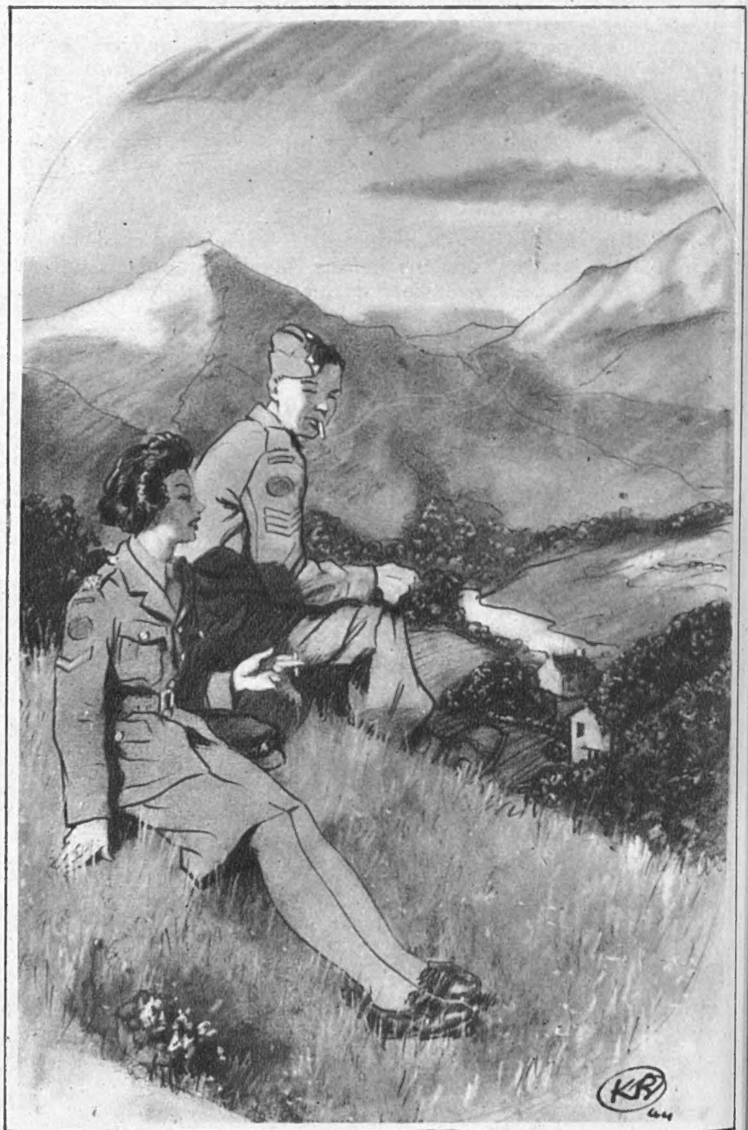
The Wash On the Rhine. But ah! greatest boon of all will be the laundry once a week! And, say, about 80 per cent.—one does not want to be greedy—of the garments that were sent to the wash coming back from the wash. Or, if not the garments, at least some shreds of them, some sentimental reminiscences of their former grandeur. That would be wonderful indeed—but will it ever come to pass? The Press has resounded with the epoch-making news that Field-Marshal Monty (congratulations, Sir!) sends his laundry right from the front to a convent in the South of England. A Sister modestly states that he sends "the usual gentleman's things," just like you and me — the human touch, you know! Now, I know of an excellent laundry in New Zealand. I think I will send my gentleman's things there in future. It would speed things up considerably.

Sweetness and Light.

So the black-out at last is not so black! On a famous occasion Sir Edward Grey said, "The lamps of Europe are going out one by one." Are they perhaps lighting up again, one by painful one? Personally, I shall not be satisfied until I can shoot a beam from my windows like a lighthouse straight into a policeman's eye!

"I must have absolute quiet—*please*!"

DRAWN BY MASKEE.



"How beautifully the mountains *fit* the landscape, don't they, Bert?"

DRAWN BY BEAUCHAMP.

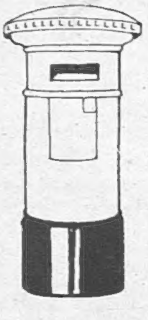
The ninety-eighth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"WOULD ANY OF YOU BOYS KNOW A GOOD PLACE FOR A PERM?"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.

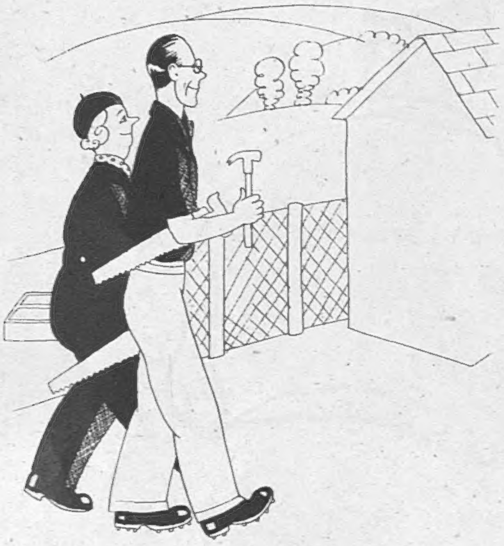


MY DEAR ROBERT—Charles and I have been away for a whole day and a night. We suddenly felt we couldn't bear the telephone any more, and when Bertha, who owns a small farm a few miles away, rang up to say she wanted Charles to look at her ankle and why not stay the night, we flung our oldest clothes into a suit-case and set off.

The worst of a holiday is that it gives you time to think how tired you are, and as soon as I got into the car I fell asleep and missed the beauties of the countryside which I had been looking forward to.

Bertha used to keep a Prep. School, where the Linnet received her early education. Then one day she decided that she preferred goats, chickens, ducks and geese to little girls, and bought a farm instead.

She greeted us warmly, but Charles even more warmly than me, for even retired school mistresses prefer Fathers to Mothers. "My dear Charles," she said, "I am delighted to see you. There are so many jobs about the place that only a man can do. What are you snorting about, Henrietta?"



"They went off together."

I looked at Charles, expecting to see the look of stubborn indifference which always comes on his face when he is asked to do an odd job about the house at home, but to my astonishment I saw nothing but boyish eagerness. "Good!" said Charles. "What are they?"

"There's hayracks for the goats," said Bertha, "and the lawn to be mown, and after that we could move the hen-house."

"Just give me a moment while I get into some old clothes," said Charles, and bounded up the stairs.

"Henrietta, you can collect apples off the ground and put them in heaps for cider."

"I'd rather——"

"You'll find a bucket in the orchard, and then you might get the supper."

"Eggs?" I said, showing some interest.

"Spam," said Bertha coldly. "I can sell my eggs."

"Butter?"

"I've sold all the butter. There's margarine."

Charles came down in a blue shirt open at the neck. "You'll take care of your hands, won't you?" I said bitterly, for "Doctor's Hands" is the excuse he always makes when asked to do something in the garden at home.

"His hands will be all right, won't they, Old Boy?" said Bertha, slapping him on the back, and they went off together, carrying saws, hammers and nails.

I went to the orchard and began collecting apples off the ground in a bucket. This is a very tiring form of work, also I am frightened of wasps, so after a time I gave it up and went and sat indoors and read my book, which was about the London Stage, and then I fell asleep. When I woke, Charles and Bertha were standing over me looking incredibly wind-swept and hearty. "Supper ready?" said Bertha, picking up my book and looking at it with raised eyebrows.

I got to my feet, mumbling excuses. "Hurry up, Old Girl," said Bertha, who was evidently in high good humour as the result of her labours. "Charles and I have been doing a job of work."

All through supper Charles and Bertha talked about the goats' hay-racks. Charles, I was given to understand, had done some skilful and original carpentry.

"Henrietta does nothing but stare," said Bertha. "She reminds me of a New Girl on the first day of school."

Directly after breakfast next morning Charles and Bertha disappeared with a scythe, and after the midday meal they mended the fence round the orchard. After tea they mended the dairy door. It was while they were doing this that Charles, who was wearing enormous hobnailed boots, slipped on the stone flags and fell down. He came into the kitchen with the blood running down his hand and dripping off the end of his fingers. "I've hurt myself," he said, in the reproachful way children do when they come to grief.

I led him to the sink and turned the tap on him and found a deep scratch just above his wrist. "How did you do it?" I said sternly.

"There was a nail sticking out of a piece of wood——"

"Stay where you are," I said, and Charles remained meekly under the tap, the most obedient Patient who ever fell into the hands of an unqualified Practitioner.

I found Charles' Bag in the car, and lugged it into the kitchen. Bertha was there, rather green about the gills, watching Charles' blood drip into the sink. "This is the Bag the Doctor brings the Baby in," I said in a hearty, medical manner as I hoisted it on to the kitchen-table. "Bertha, you'd better open the window and then sit down and put your head between your knees." Bertha did so, and I began to enjoy my week-end.

The inside of Charles' Bag was full of mysteries, but I said, "Now, then, Iodine," in a confident manner and scroutled about until I found a bottle, but it seemed to smell of cough mixture, so I put it back and found another, which was marked IODINE, large and clear. Then I held the cut on Charles' wrist open with my finger and thumb and poured it in. Charles gave a loud groan and Bertha left the room.

"I wonder whether I ought to give you a tetanus injection," I said.

"No," said Charles, more in the old manner.

"I never have, but I don't mind trying—like the man who was asked to play the violin at the party."

"No," said Charles. "*No.*"

So I had to content myself with as neat a piece of bandaging as has ever been done by human hands, and fastened it with a patent sort of clip. I was so pleased with the general effect that I called to Bertha to come and look, but she wouldn't.

"The great thing about a holiday," said Charles as we drove home that evening, "is not that you do nothing, but that you do something Different."

"Yes," I said.

"As neat a piece of bandaging as has ever been done by human hands."

"Though I says it as shouldn't, I made a very neat job of that hayrack," said Charles.

"The roof on our wood-shed is in a terrible state, Charles," I said.

"Is it?" said Charles. "You'd better get somebody to mend it."

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

"This is a very tiring form of work."

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HEROES, ARTISTS, BRIDES AND BRIDE-GROOMS.

SQUADRON LEADER J. A. CARLIER, *whose home is in Brussels, was the pilot who brought M. Pierlot, the Belgian Prime Minister, back to Belgium by air after his years of exile.*

This celebration is in honour of C.S.M. PETER HAROLD WRIGHT, *Coldstream Guards. He was awarded a D.C.M. for gallantry in Italy in 1943, but the King has approved that this be replaced by the Victoria Cross.*

The marriage of MISS PAMELA MARY MORGAN-GRENVILLE, *eldest daughter of Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Thomas Morgan-Grenville, to* CAPTAIN ALEC FRANCIS, *Welsh Guards, took place at the King's Chapel of the Savoy.*

FRED ASTAIRE *got a big hug from his sister,* ADÈLE (LADY CHARLES CAVENDISH), *when he went to give a broadcast from the Rainbow Corner American Red Cross Club, where Lady Charles works.*

Left: PRINCESS JULIANA OF THE NETHERLANDS *has left her war-time retreat in Canada, and recently arrived in this country by air. No wonder she smiles at having taken the first "hop" towards home.*

WING COMMANDER GEOFFREY L. CHESHIRE, *D.S.O., the new R.A.F. V.C., is described as "probably the greatest bomber pilot of any air force in the world." He is with his wife,* CONSTANCE BINNEY, *the actress.*

The marriage of HEATHER ANGEL, *English-born 20th Century-Fox actress, and* CAPTAIN ROBERT SINCLAIR, *U.S.A.A.F., former stage and screen director, took place at Beverly Hills Community Presbyterian Church.*

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

ONE of the best Pacific war-films Hollywood has ever made comes in under the horrid title "WING AND A PRAYER" (Odeon). This picture belongs to the documentary order of things, and the style oddly reminds me of C. S. Forester's fine novel "The Ship." The subject of the film is a single aircraft-carrier that becomes a pawn in the game of the battle of Midway. Three months after Pearl Harbour, when the cry is still going round America, "Where is our Navy?" and "Why don't we strike back?" the carrier sets out under sealed orders on a curious mission. Her job is to sail, in an apparently aimless fashion, around Pacific waters, constantly changing course and evading action. When her 'planes encounter a flight of Zeros, their instructions are to run away. The carrier's part is to deceive the Japs into thinking the American Navy is scattered and demoralised, and so lead the enemy into a trap at Midway Island. But the crew don't know this. All they know is that their comrades are being killed, their 'planes shot down, while they themselves are forbidden to engage in combat. Morale aboard the carrier sinks lower and lower; nerves are strained almost to breaking-point; there is the ugly tension in the air that precedes mutiny. At last, with the Japs sailing confidently towards Midway, comes the long-awaited order to fight.

"Wing and a Prayer" is something quite out of the ordinary run of Pacific war pictures. Henry Hathaway, who directed it, has handled his drama with a restraint almost amounting to genius. There is little direct action in the film; this is no turbulent battlescape; even the climax at Midway is not shown, but heard through the carrier's loud-speakers. You hear the pilots barking orders; you hear the sway and zoom and crash of battle; you sense the whole thing with heightened excitement through the faces of the men left behind on the carrier.

Scarcely less impressive is the scene in which a 'plane, limping back from combat, is prevented by heavy rains from finding the carrier. Forbidden to break radio silence, the helpless crew stand by and listen to the lost 'plane as it circles above the clouds; they hear the engine sputter and stop; they hear the 'plane crash into the sea; they can do nothing.

This sort of thing is good drama and good cinema, and "Wing and a Prayer" is full of it. The acting, particularly of Don Ameche and Charles Bickford, matches the direction in force and economy. It is a pity, I think, that they have bothered to introduce a personal equation into a film that deals essentially with men as members of a serving unit. "Wing and a Prayer" is too good for the old stuff about the pilot who won't take discipline, and the callow boys who think their C.O. heartless.

"AN AMERICAN ROMANCE" (Prince of Wales), unless I am much mistaken, raises political and social issues quite incommensurate with its value as a piece of film-making. It is not a very remarkable piece of film-making, to my way of thinking. I found it too long, chunkily acted, lacking in the preservative salt of humour, and just a little bit dull.

What sort of romance is it to which the Americans have given their special imprimatur? Well, it's the romance of an immigrant peasant who arrives in 1898 to work in the Minnesota iron-mines. Stefan Dangosbiblichek (Brian Donlevy) cannot read, or speak, more than a few words of English, but he is the sort of immigrant they dream of in Ellis Island. He is hard-working and strong and biddable. He is delighted to save the officials trouble by shortening his name to Steve Dangos. He is anxious to learn "all about i-ron" and the in-ali-en-able rights of man. He learns about the inalienable rights of man from the village schoolmistress (Ann Richards), and all about i-ron from the en-cy-clo-pædia. In due time he marries the schoolmistress—and they have four strong American sons: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

In the meantime, Steve Dangos goes on and up in his chosen profession. From iron he turns to steel, from steel to the manufacture of motor-cars. He becomes an automobile magnate, with a vast modern plant, and a clean dress shirt each evening. He also becomes an American citizen. His success story is interrupted for a time when his youngest son, Theodore Roosevelt, introduces the trade-union system into the factory. Steve Dangos likes the old-fashioned personal touch between master and man, and retires in a noble pet to grow oranges in California. But one Sunday in December 1941 he switches on the radio, and hears—can you guess? You can? Splendid. He hurries back to the old plant, now converted into a bomber factory, and promptly steps up the annual product from 1000 to 4500; thus fulfilling the prophecy of the village schoolmistress, who observed in 1899: "I thought there was iron in you. I thought you would rise to the skies."

The première of Paramount's "The Hitler Gang" will be held at the Carlton Theatre on September 29. It is a documentary story of the Nazi leaders' private lives from the close of World War I to the opening days of the present war. Above: Hitler (ROBERT WATSON) *with his niece Geli Rauble* (POLDY DUR). *Below: Can you spot the Nazi gangsters among their Hollywood doubles without looking at the captions?*

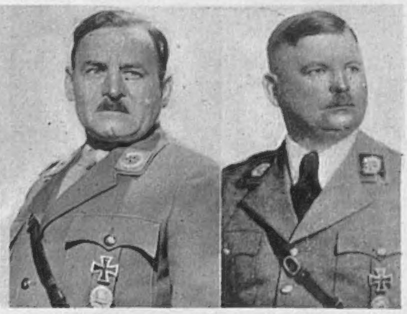
ROBERT WATSON *as* ADOLF HITLER.

ALEXANDER POPE *as* HERMANN GOERING.

VICTOR VARCONI *as* RUDOLF HESS.

MARTIN KOSLECK *as* DR. JOSEF GOEBBELS.

LOUIS VAN ROOTEN *as* HEINRICH HIMMLER



ROMAN BOHNEN *as* ERNST ROEHM

N.B.—Our list of the Best Theatres will be found on page 162.

"You ape! You hairy ape!" shrieks New York socialite Mildred (SUSAN HAYWARD), *secretly attracted by the great stoker Hank* (WILLIAM BENDIX), *and loved by Second Engineer Lazar* (JOHN LODER). *The voyage of the refugee-loaded s.s. "Amerigo" from Lisbon to New York in convoy is the plot of "The Hairy Ape" (New Gallery).*

"An American Romance" is in Technicolor, and the camera has managed some exciting and even beautiful shots of the practical aspects of steel-working. There are fine pictures of derricks and converters against a smoky sky; glowing caves of molten metal; a ring of stripped, sweating workers stoking furnaces in a red gloom that is reminiscent of some Dante-esque inferno. These compositions are often good enough to frame, if you happen to find such subjects cosy. Beside them Brian Donlevy, in his plaid coat, appears an inconsequential figure, and once the immigrant got away from the magic of the converters, his romance seemed to me a considerable bore.

But—and it is a big but—I realise that "An American Romance" is not primarily intended for the ordinary British citizen. It is intended for Americans, and particularly for the millions of immigrant Americans and their American-born children. It is also intended, I have very little doubt, for potential immigrants who may one day become American citizens. I said, some paragraphs back, that the film raises political and social issues. I hope the U.S. authorities are prepared to cope with the quota problems that will undoubtedly arise when it is shown to the people of liberated Europe! How many war-weary and harassed Czechs and Poles and Yugoslavs are going to make a dash for the nearest emigration office when they see this picture of a land of warm welcome and unlimited opportunity?

I sometimes wonder, looking at a film like "An American Romance," how long the British film industry can go on without making any counter-statement to the implied suggestion that America is the only land of promise. Great Britain herself may be small and over-crowded, but she is part of a very flourishing young Commonwealth of Nations.

Frank Launder, who wrote and directed that excellent film about the workers in our aircraft factories, "Millions Like Us," has turned out another group portrait of women in wartime called "2000 WOMEN"

"Voice in the Wind" (London Pavilion) stars FRANCIS LEDERER *as Jan Volny, Czech pianist who with Nazi permission gives a concert in Prague. They stipulate that a patriotic symphony of Smetana must be excluded. Volny finishes with a short paraphrase of the symphony.*

(Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion). This time his subject is a German concentration camp in France, where the approximate number of British women mentioned in the title are interned in what was once a luxury hotel. Mr. Launder has been advised in his detail by a real-life internee, a Miss Edith Nicholson, who escaped from Vittel, after two years' imprisonment, by the simple expedient of scrambling under the barbed-wire, walking into the railway station and buying a ticket for Paris. The rest of her journey home was not so simple. It occupied many painful months, during which Miss Nicholson was sheltered by members of the Paris Underground, tramped south and crossed the Pyrenees in winter, was thrown into a Spanish prison, released through the strenuous offices of the British Consul, took ship from Gibraltar, and was thoroughly bombed on the voyage home, and was charged £100 for the privilege on her arrival.

The camp in Mr. Launder's film is not identified with Vittel, and those who like to do their own guessing do it on their own responsibility. The absolute location is probably not important. The thing is the 2000 women. As is the custom in such group films, special types are selected for special study. There is the newspaper-woman (Phyllis Calvert), the show-girl (Jean Kent) with a sliding scale of values, the novice (Patricia Roc), who is still fresh enough from the world to be torn between love of a man and her chosen vocation, and two glorious spinster battle-axes, with sensible shoes and solid principles. This pair, beautifully played by Flora Robson and Muriel Aked, are obviously, I should say, a Launder conception. They form the feminine counterpart to his celebrated Charteris and Caldecott, who have been impersonated—I had almost said immortalised—on the screen and radio by Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne.

"2000 Women" is not as good a film as "Millions Like Us"; at least, if you happen to prefer restraint to melodrama. There is a fairly far-fetched story about three airmen who bale out in the grounds of the hotel, and are smuggled out to freedom by the women. There are fights between the girls that may be realistic, but are not particularly agreeable to watch, and there is an ugly little comedy scene in which a dead German guard sits in at a bridge game as dummy. Personally, I could have done with a good deal more of Miss Robson and Miss Aked, and a good deal less of some of the other ladies. But for all that, the film is a good, workmanlike bit of film-craft. Mr. Launder has been writing scenarios for years, and knows just how to turn a scene into material for pictures. He can start a whisper running through a crowd like a wind through corn. He has a high opinion of audience intelligence, and rarely labours a point until it becomes a bore. Possibly he is even wise in his rationing of Miss Robson and Miss Aked. There may be something to be said, after all, for giving the customers a taste of a good thing, and leaving them asking for more; sending them away with a certain sense of frustration.

Although "THE SEVENTH CROSS" (Empire) was presumably not made with any idea of exhibition in Germany after the Allied forces of occupation take over, it will certainly not do anything to jeopardise post-war relations with that country. It is as anti-Nazi in its ideology as the next film, but it does insist pretty firmly that there were a lot of good Germans in the Fatherland in 1936, and suggests that the good Germans may still be there, gone to ground, if they haven't all been bumped off in the meantime.

The story is about a fugitive from a pre-war concentration camp. Seven men escape. Six are recaptured and put to death. The seventh, played by Spencer Tracy, makes his way from unit to unit of the German Underground, finding everywhere courageous people who are

Nazi brutality unhinges Volny's mind. He smuggles his girl out of the country and escapes to Guadalupe, calling himself El Hombre. Wrecking the sinister plan of Luigi (J. CARROL NAISH) *to rob and murder refugees, El Hombre brings down upon his head a malicious revenge which snaps his mind back to normal.*

prepared to risk their lives to save his. With their help, he reaches an inn on the waterfront, where he finally gets a boat to Holland.

It is the old man-hunt story, with a difference. The difference is a certain nervous brilliance in the direction, which never falters, never holds a scene too long, gets its effects obliquely. There is plenty of horror in "The Seventh Cross," but no horrors for horror's sake.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

TOMMY, for having the time of his life!

Just watch TOMMY'S step as he marches into Continental towns freed from the Nazis! There are cakes and kisses for him; the cider barrel is rolled out, the bottle of wine is uncorked, the people mad with pleasure and relief at the disappearance of the Boche after five years of his company, give Tommy such a welcome as he will never forget. He has a whale of a time! These photographs, taken in and around Brussels, show that the Belgians think nothing is too good for Tommy, who, as you see, shares his chocolate with the girls and signs his autograph when asked!

"LILY MAID."

This graceful still-life is on view at the Thirty-fifth Annual Exhibition of the London Salon of Photography held at the R.W.S. Galleries, 26-27, Conduit Street. Other exhibits from the same show appear on the two following pages.

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH BY GRACE BALLANTYNE.

ROMANTIC CURVILINEAR

"GOLDEN SLIPPERS," by B. Vincent Abbott.

"BABETTE

IN the sixth year of war
of the London Salon o
fine work on the part of its
preceding page. Composi
careful and ingenious thou
flower-pieces, portraits, and
from Britain but from a
holding its Exhibition till
26-27, Conduit Street, W.1

N.B. A Coloured

by P. H. Oelman.

irty-fifth International Exhibition
graphy discloses no abatement in
s, as can be seen here, and on the
d treatment are given the most
nd there are many landscapes,
subjects which come not only
This year again the Salon is
er 14, in the R.W.S. Galleries.
on week-days; 2-6 on Sundays.

is inserted in this issue.

AT THE LONDON SALON.

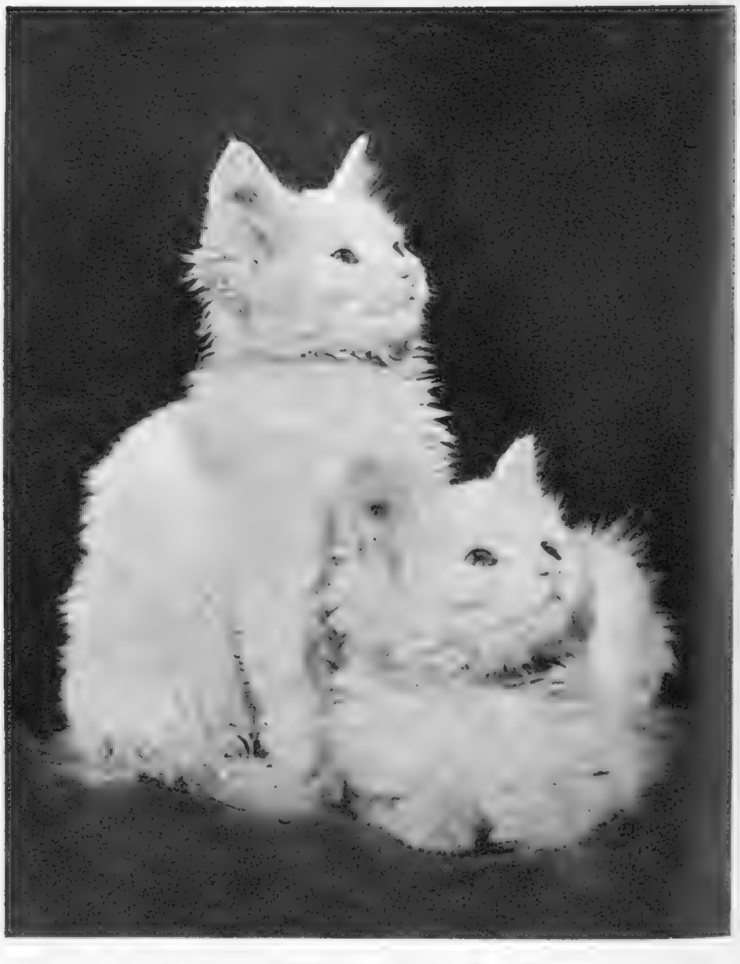
"PLEASANT REFLECTIONS," by Thelma Mason.

BEAUTY AND BREEDING AT THE R.P.S.

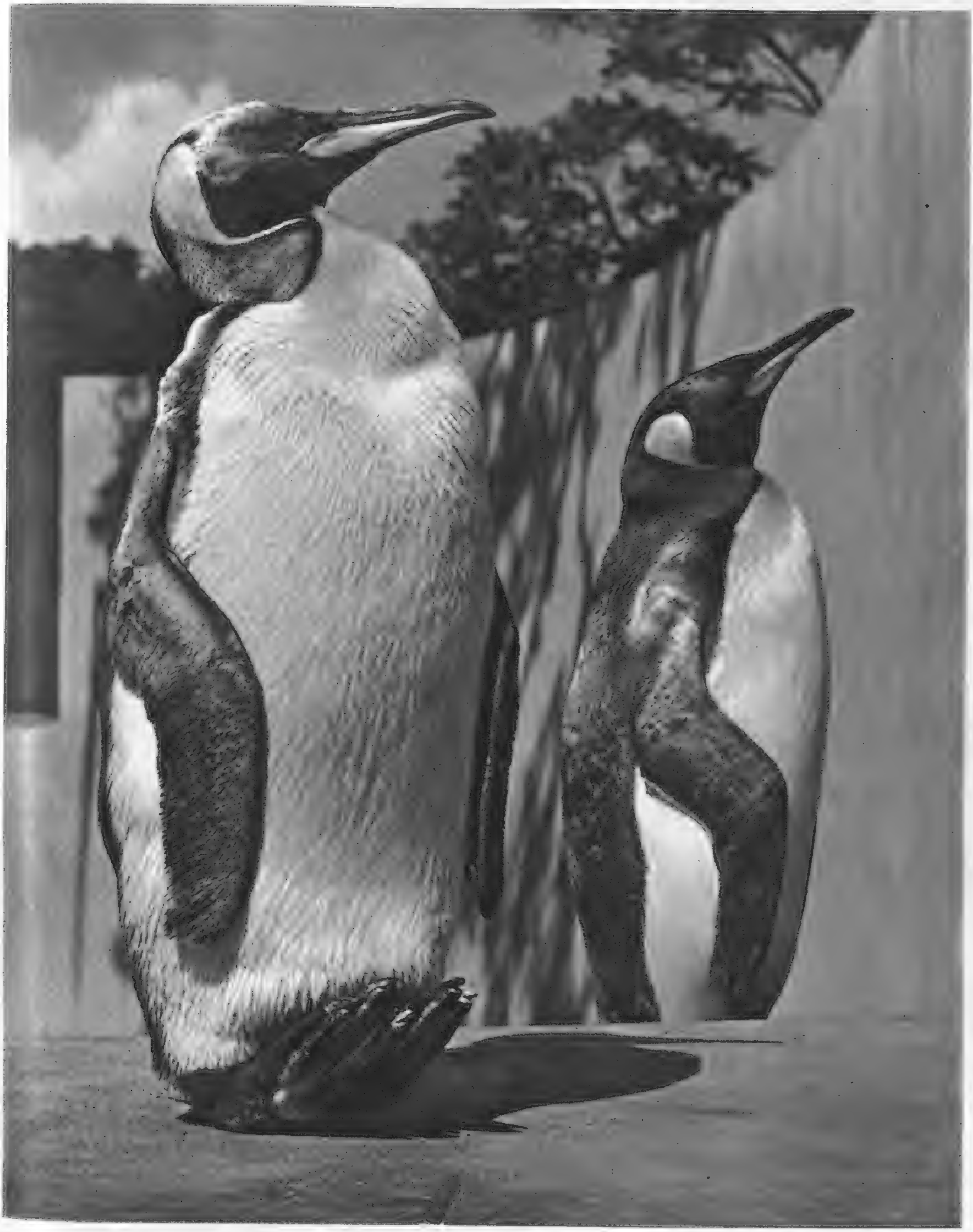
THE three excellent camera shots on this page are on view at the Eighty-ninth Annual Exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society at 16, Prince's Gate. Everyone who has tried to photograph animals knows how difficult it is to choose the split second in which these lively subjects may be snapped, and certainly the ratty fox-terrier is not the easiest to catch, but these three are perfect studies. The Exhibition opened on September 9 and remains open till October 21, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. week-days, and on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 5.

"LITTLE SISTERS," by Jack Wright, A.R.P.S.

"SITTING PRETTY," by Miss E. Bjorkman.



"ANTICIPATION," by D. H. B. McClellan.



SLEEPING ON THEIR FEET.

These penguins made a splendid "still" life for the cameraman, who had probably plenty of time to compose his picture! This photograph, "Sleeping Partners," is on view at the Eighty-ninth Exhibition of the R.P.S., at 16, Prince's Gate, and may be compared with the volatile family pets from the same exhibition on another page.

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH BY W. E. BALL, A.R.P.S.

PIN-UPS OF THE AIR

ON these pages we give portraits of twenty well-known pilots decorated for outstanding feats. G/Capt. Gordon-Finlayson, son of General Sir Robert

[*Continued in centre.*

WING COMMANDER R. P. BEAMONT, D.S.O., D.F.C.

GROUP CAPTAIN A. G. MALAN, D.S.O., D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER G. L. RAPHAEL, D.S.O., D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER R. H. HARRIES, D.S.O., D.F.C.

Gordon-Finlayson, is a born leader. He commanded a Bomber Squadron in the Middle East for some time; W/Cdr. E. P. "Hawkeye" Wells is a New Zealander, an Ace Spitfire pilot and friend of "Johnnie" Johnson; G/Capt. "Catseyes" Cunningham is the celebrated night-fighter; Flt./Lt. Rawnsley, his navigator, has also personally accounted for many enemy 'planes; W/Cdr. Kingaby, son of the Rev. P. F. Kingaby, is a Battle of Britain Ace, known as "the Me. 109 specialist"; G/Capt. Wykeham-Barnes was for over two years in the thick of the Middle East fighting. Reported missing in 1940, he was later found to be safe; G/Capt. Mahaddie was born in 1911 at Leith, and enlisted in the R.A.F. in 1928; W/Cdr. J. R. D. Braham is one of the top-scoring T.A.F. Mosquito pilots; G/Capt. "Sailor" Malan is one of the most famous of R.A.F. personalities; W/Cdr. G. L. Raphael was born in Quebec, and enlisted in the R.A.F. in

WING COMMANDER A. C. DEERE, D.S.O., D.F.C.

GROUP CAPTAIN J. CUNNINGHAM, D.S.O., D.F.C.

GROUP CAPTAIN T. G. MAHADDIE, D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C.

WING COMMANDER COLIN F. GRAY, D.S.O., D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER F. D. S. SCOTT-MALDEN, D.S.O., D.F.C.

FLIGHT LT. C. F. RAWNSLEY, D.S.O., D.F.C., D.F.M.

TWENTY R.A.F. PILOTS.

GROUP CAPTAIN P.G. WYKEHAM-BARNES, D.S.O., D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER G.B. GIBSON, V.C., D.S.O., D.F.C.

Continued.]
took part in the campaign in Greece, Crete and the Western Desert. He enlisted in the Royal Corps of Signals in 1933, and became a pupil pilot in the R.A.F. in 1937.

WING COMMANDER C.E. CURRANT, D.S.O., D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER P.B. LUCAS, D.S.O., D.F.C.

1935. An ex-bomber pilot, he transferred to fighters in 1940, and took part in the flying-bomb battle; W/Cdr. Harries is an exceptionally skilful, courageous and determined fighter. He went on a 20,000-mile lecture and goodwill tour of the U.S. before starting on his third tour of ops.; W/Cdr. Scott-Malden is a brilliant pilot. He took part in the Dieppe raid ops. and in very many others; W/Cdr. Currant is a Battle of Britain pilot, and has served in Fighter Command since 1937; W/Cdr. Gray is a New Zealander, an exceptionally able pilot and leader; W/Cdr. Gibson, V.C., is the famous "Dambuster"; W/Cdr. A. C. Deere is a New Zealander, fearless, tenacious and unswervingly devoted to duty; S/Ldr. "Laddie" Lucas was a peacetime sports writer and golfer. Commissioned in 1941, he is a skilful and gallant leader; W/Cdr. Beamont has an impressive record (led a Tempest wing against the flying bombs); S/Ldr. Learoyd, V.C., was decorated in 1940 for his attack on the Dortmund-Ems canal; W/Cdr. Walker

[*Continued above.*

GROUP CAPTAIN J.R. GORDON-FINLAYSON, D.S.O., D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER D.E. KINGABY, D.S.O., D.F.M.

WING COMMANDER D.R. WALKER, D.F.C.

WING COMMANDER J.R.D. BRAHAM, D.S.O., D.F.C.

SQUADRON LEADER R.A.B. LEAROYD, V.C.

WING COMMANDER E.P. WELLS, D.S.O., D.F.C.

"2000 WOMEN" IS AN INTERNEE FILM.

" I'll leave you in your Group Leader's hands " : Frau Holweg (CHRISTINA FORBES ; *right) hands the new batch of internees over to Teresa King* (BETTY JARDINE ; *left). They are Freda* (PHYLLIS CALVERT), *Miss Meredith* (MURIEL AKED), *Bridie* (JEAN KENT), *Miss Manningford* (FLORA ROBSON), *and Rosemary* (PATRICIA ROC).

Rosemary Brown (PATRICIA ROC), *a novice, put in prison for a suspected signal to the Germans, is rescued by them and sent instead to the camp for internment.*

Just as she is saying good-night to her pin-ups, internee Margaret (ANNE CRAWFORD) *is horrified to see a man's face reflected in her mirror. It is Alec* (REGINALD PURDELL), *a baled-out British airman seeking refuge, and not in vain.*

Bridie (JEAN KENT) *successfully hides another airman, Dave* (BOB ARDEN), *till her German lover, Hentzner* (CARL JAFFE), *arrives and sees the Englishman's reflection in the glass. They close, the German is strangled, the corpse hidden.*

Miss Manningford (FLORA ROBSON ; *right) is horrified when a fellow-internee bursts into the room she shares with Miss Meredith* (MURIEL AKED) *and discovers Alec* (REGINALD PURDELL), *whom they are concealing.*

The internees revel in the communal bathroom of their new internment camp, a former luxury hotel.

GAINSBOROUGH'S "2000 Women" deals with the life of a German internment camp in a French luxury hotel at Marnville. The crew of a British 'plane bale out over the camp, and the three men are successfully hidden by the women and helped away to freedom. Phyllis Calvert, Flora Robson, Patricia Roc and Renee Houston star with Reginald Purdell and James McKechnie. Directed by Frank Launder.

Pin-up Girl: No. 9. Jean Arthur

JEAN ARTHUR *has been signed on to star with Lee Bowman in "The Impatient Years," Columbia's comedy of hasty wartime marriages. In private life she is Mrs. Ross, the wife of producer Frank J. Ross, junior. She and her husband live in a Californian ranch-style house in Brentwood, Cal., overlooking a garden with a sloping lawn, shaded by lemon-trees. Miss Arthur, whose maiden name was Gladys Green, has made big hits on the stage and the screen. Her latest pictures include "Only Angels Have Wings" and "The More the Merrier."*

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

POLITICAL passions are among the strongest that human nature knows; the most infectious, the most insidious, the most resistant to reason, the most liable to corruption. In the past, when such a passion seemed to have outlived its usefulness and to be operating in the interest of a few or against the welfare of the many, lovers of liberty or haters of folly took up their guns in protest. To this impulse to expose the abuses of the times we owe Milton's "Areopagitica," Swift's "Conduct of the Allies," Defoe's "Shortest Way with the Dissenters," Burke's "Thoughts on the French Revolution," and many more. Great works of literature, they stand as memorials of what art combined with vision can do to preserve truth.

But to-day the dangers of division have in all countries become more manifest than the equally great dangers of association, and the slogan "it doesn't matter what we say as long as we all say the same" may soon carry the corollary "it doesn't matter what we think as long as we all think alike." And those who reject this doctrine have not been able to give their protests that quality of literature without which the very spirit they are trying to preserve must speak with an uncertain voice, quickly drowned by the blare of identical voices round it.

A Plea for the Individual. Sir Osbert Sitwell's writing has the necessary literary quality and his voice the carrying power. His pamphlet, "A Letter to My Son," is a plea for individualism against the organised collectivism of the present and the future. More precisely and particularly, it is a plea for the artist against the Philistines, as represented by the politician and the Little Man, the politician's slave. The politicians of the "interbellum" brought us to our present pass by the cruel and gigantic unemployment they allowed. . . . But the danger and indeed the horror you will have to face will be of a different order; *over-employment*. You may see the whole world tied to a machine that will not let go of it. The price of bread will be a life-sentence. Once or twice a week, perhaps, "time off" will be allowed for machine pleasures, such as the cinema. . . . But I would fight—and I know you would—for the right to be idle. We would always oppose the ants in their awful paradise.

The dangers of unbridled collectivism are greater now than they were, because whereas in former ages of barbarism the whole populations of whole countries were uprooted and enslaved *after* a war by a victorious foe, now every government uproots and enslaves its own people *during* a war. Only thus can a country survive in total war.

Safeguarding the Future. Sir Osbert has some original suggestions for safeguarding the future. Refrain from returning to power the type of politician whose incompetence makes wars inevitable. Combat xenophobia by caricaturing its prejudices not by arguing with them; counter incredible atrocity stories not by denying them but by always going one better. Remember that the Germans gave us comparatively little trouble in the days when they hired themselves out as mercenaries; make them the armed force of the League of Nations, when their natural bent for fighting will find a useful outlet and their numbers be automatically kept down.

These are some of the points of the "Letter," but paraphrased and taken out of their context they give only a faint idea of the incomparable zest of spirit which urges this flying bomb to its target in the forts of folly.

The Coburnes. Robert Coburne and Racey his wife live in a white Georgian house on the outskirts of Stonebridge, a country town now (in the nineteen-thirties) being rapidly industrialised. In thought and in way of life (he consciously and she unconsciously) they belong to the age of Mozart. But Racey is a woman of wide sympathies and ready to examine every innovation on its merits; while he, under his invincible good manners, has a streak of fanaticism inherited from the ancestor whose menacing portrait is an important symbol in Miss Jenkins' story. A boy of four completes the family, but they are joined at intervals by Robert's much younger sister Helen, a girl whose vagueness and sweetness of nature and proneness to pity make her the especial prey of the maimed or baffled misfits in which the district abounds. When the story opens, she is getting engaged to a flashy, common man; but it is not so much his flirtation with the Coburnes' maid as his lying to her about it that makes her break with him.

Sheep and Goats. The significance of this is a crucial point in the story that may easily be missed. In some ways Miss Jenkins is an unusually explicit novelist. She is not at all impressionistic and has a vivid sense of the concrete. Pictures of scenery, records of conversation, comments upon character flow from her pen like drops of water, clear, cool and distinct; nor do they coalesce when they reach the reader's mind. She is too economical an artist, and perhaps too respectful of her reader's intelligence, to leave signposts for his direction. The result, in my case, was that I didn't see what she was driving at—the story did not come together for me, until nearly the end. Granted that "through Helen's mild acceptance of what was offered her on every side, her circle of sensations was much wider than Racey's own," I did not see why she had to champion all the more disreputable or disagreeable characters in the story—the egregious George, the detestable Meisels, the shady Lirripers and the Coburnes' gardener—a kind of Caliban, surly and possibly mad. I could not see why Miss Jenkins had got her knife into some of her creations—*e.g.*, Meisels, the Communist, and Jacqueline Carter—so deeply that their portraits, though undoubtedly entertaining, belong to burlesque, not to a serious, straight novel.

The explanation is, I think, that she is presenting two worlds, one—Robert's and Racey's—gracious, intelligent, dignified, full of sweetness and light, but static, a survival; the other the world of the future that is crawling and pullulating round the White House, threatening all it stands for. The tragedy is that Helen, who belongs by temperament and tradition to the White House, is compelled by her loyalty to her idea of what is right to join its enemies, thus finding herself on the other side of the barricade to Robert, who so adores her.

A Mixed Company. "So Immortal a Flower" is a novel, a travel-book and an account of the war in Crete. Once again the Mediterranean proves a potent lure to Mr. Cecil Roberts' imagination; and few will be the readers, travelled or untravelled, who will not find something to awaken longing in his descriptions of Tunis and Sicily and Crete, or to awaken interest in his references to their legends and antiquities. The personal element in the story is a little subdued—first to the pictorial and archæological setting, and afterwards to the German onslaught on Crete. Under the strain of physical suffering and endurance (the heroine, an English girl, joins the Cretan guerillas fighting against the Germans), the characters tend to become depersonalised, though not dehumanised. This is a cosmopolitan novel; Sylvia numbers among her friends Italians, Cretans and the disabled Austrian officer whom Destiny drops from an aeroplane close by her. Though badly infested by the Nazi virus, he is otherwise a pleasant fellow; the Italians, too, are sympathetic, when detached from their political creed. Indeed, Mr. Roberts is one of the few novelists who, in writing about the nationals of enemy countries, do not protray them as individually entirely odious. To avoid this simplification, he has recourse to an almost mystical belief that high deeds are their own justification, by whomsoever performed. The flower fades, but its beauty is sufficient for the hour for which it lives. Whether such a view is consistent with the conception of liberty, an immortal flower, springing from the blood of the combatants, I do not feel able to say. But, at any rate, the feeling of beauty persists through the book, in spite of the horrors through which it passes.

A Pious Hope. When Mr. Young, curate at the country village of Glanville, was taken ill, the choirboys, though genuinely sorry, "were unable to suppress a hope that there might have been some foul play somewhere." This hope (which was granted) seems to have been shared by most of the Rev. Andrew Hastings' parishioners; never was a murder taken more light-heartedly—even before it had transpired what kind of a man Mr. Young was. "Who Killed the Curate?" owes more to Miss Joan Coggin's ear for dialogue than to her interest in detection, but it passes the time most agreeably.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

A Letter to My Son. By Sir Osbert Sitwell. (*Home and Van Thal; 3s. 6d.*)
Robert and Helen. By Elizabeth Jenkins. (*Gollancz; 8s. 6d.*)
So Immortal a Flower. By Cecil Roberts. (*Hodder and Stoughton; 8s. 6d.*)
Who Killed the Curate? By Joan Coggin. (*Hurst and Blackett; 8s. 6d.*)

THE BEST PLAYS.

Starred by "The Sketch." ***=*top-score.*

*** "BLITHE SPIRIT" (*Duchess*). Coward play. Penelope Ward, Joyce Carey, Nicholas Phipps.

*** "UNCLE HARRY" (*Garrick*). Murder thriller, with Michael Redgrave and Beatrix Lehmann.

** "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" (*Strand*). Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

** "WHILE THE SUN SHINES" (*Globe*). Farce, Jane Baxter, Ronald Squire, Hugh McDermott.

** "SWEETER AND LOWER" (*Ambassadors*). Second edition of "Sweet and Low" revue: Hermione Gingold and Henry Kendall.

**SADLER'S WELLS OPERA (*Princes*).

** "TO-MORROW THE WORLD" (*Aldwych*). Nazi youth. Robert Harris, Elizabeth Allan, Jean Cadell, David O'Brien.

* "QUIET WEEK-END" (*Wyndham's*). Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

* "IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?" (*Duke of York's*). Ralph Lynn; Enid Stamp Taylor.

* "THIS WAS A WOMAN" (*Comedy*). Sonia Dresdel, John Bryning, Nova Pilbeam in effective melodrama.

* "THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY" (*Savoy*). Jack Buchanan, Coral Browne, Athene Seyler.

* "BIRD IN HAND" (*St. Martin's*). Drinkwater comedy. Herbert Lomas.

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre to avoid disappointment.

BARBARA STANWYCK AND FRED MacMURRAY AS MURDERERS.

BARBARA STANWYCK *plays the part of murderess Phyllis Dietrichson in* "DOUBLE INDEMNITY," *at the Plaza. Phyllis is an accessory to the killing of her husband*

Neff (FRED MacMURRAY) *becomes so besotted by the charms of Phyllis that he conspires with her to murder Dietrichson and cash in on his insurance policy.*

Having previously murdered Dietrichson, Neff, assisted by Phyllis, puts the body on the permanent-way, so that the victim may be thought to have fallen from a train.

Neff kills Dietrichson, and then impersonates his victim and goes with Phyllis on a train journey. The insurance policy is doubled if the death occurs on a train.

Barton Keyes (EDWARD G. ROBINSON; *right*), *the insurance claims manager, is not satisfied that the death of Dietrichson was accidental. Phyllis and Neff are being questioned.*

"DOUBLE INDEMNITY," the Paramount picture version of the James M. Cain thriller, was due at the Plaza on Friday last, September 15. Edward G. Robinson, Barbara Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray appear in unaccustomed rôles, for Edward G. is the man on the side of law and order who hunts down the criminals, and Barbara and Fred are the heartless murderers.

Neff has planned a perfect crime, but though his alibi is so watertight, he begins to feel nervous when Barton Keyes is so obviously suspicious about the "accident."

"I WOULD NOT RISK MY NECK."*

By E. E. LAING.

IT was between depth-charge and depth-charge that Andy Martin told the story. Through a narrow inlet near Bergen, there is a wide stretch of water known as the Bottomless Fjord, but the submarine *Glowfish* had found the bottom fairly easily. A few fathoms above it a German destroyer was acting up to her label and dropping destruction like confetti. There was nothing for the underwater crew to do but stop, look and listen.

"Scared ?" asked one of the torpedo-men.

Andy was the ship's cook. He had the wide-eyed stare of a child, the strength of a gorilla and a memory like a cine-camera. He said exactly what his mates expected him to say :

"I remember something worse 'n this."

A near-shot shook the *Glowfish* before the words were out of his mouth. Before his hearers could give the retort discourteous, there was another tremor, and the hiss of water in the control-room. A section of his audience disappeared down a dank passage to help the control units.

"Something worse," said the torpedo-man gently. "It might cheer us up."

"It happened when I was passenger, not crew," said Andy sleepily. Already the air was troubling him. "I was going to America with the old *Irmengard*—Tourist Class."

"I remember her. A Jerry-owned ship. She went under in '42. Ugly brute she was. Made out of orange-boxes, I should say."

"Tin cans, more like," said Andy. "Orange-boxes float better than she did." A charge rumbled farther away.

"Not so good," observed the torpedo-man. "Perhaps the Nazi doesn't really know where we live after all. . . . I was beginning to think that she knew the street *and* the number. What about the *Irmengard*, then ?"

A faintly coy expression flickered across Andy's face.

"I was on my honeymoon. My girl had always wanted to see the Atlantic, so we thought that it would be a nice trip—to New York and back. Interesting and yet kind of quiet. It was too early in the spring to expect a really smooth crossing, but Grace never gets seasick, and we reckoned that food would be good. The Germans owned the ship, as you said, and they know how to stuff themselves. Well—off we went."

"Something else seems to have gone off, too." The torpedo-man was looking at an ominous trickle of water on the plating, a trickle scarcely visible, yet permanent. As he studied it, there came a crash which seemed to be divided from them by nothing except a little space and less metal. The circling destroyer was touring doggedly.

"The Channel wasn't too good on the first day—too like whipped cream for most of the customers, so Grace and I had a lot of the dining quarters to ourselves. They did us proud. As there was a chop-and-swell sea, the stewards watched to see which of us would be laid out first, but we disappointed them. Right through we went. It was marvellous."

Both parties contemplated this memory for a moment. A youth returned from the control-room to say that conditions were slightly better, but the Old Man would not risk using the pumps in case the ship's position was betrayed to the bloodhound aloft. A crash to starboard justified this course.

"On the second day the sea was like a glass of water, but we ran into a mist in the afternoon—not a fog exactly, but a low overcast that lay on the sea-surface for stretches at a time. It was worse in the evening, and a blizzard started up—nothing fierce, but enough to make the bridge nasty for the night. I remember going into the smoking-room and ordering a drink, and being damn' glad that I was a passenger."

"Ah," said the other, "the Old Man would be in a bad spot that night."

"It turned out worse than he reckoned. . . . I finished my drink and my thriller, and turned in just before the steward came along to shut up shop. The *Irmengard* took 900 passengers easily, you know, although she never looked her size, owing to the shabby way they'd cut her outline in the first place."

There came the curiously sharp click—a rare sound underwater—that precedes the explosion of a depth-charge. It was much louder than preceding clicks. Nothing came of it.

"Cor !" whispered the youth from the control-room.

Involuntarily they looked at the clock, its face already cracked by earlier vibrations.

It had stopped, but they gazed at the smashed glass for several seconds as if hypnotised.

"Dud," decided the youth. "I think I like the others better. Duds make you sweat for no reason."

"Queer sort of liking," grumbled the torpedo-man. "I suppose you fell overboard before morning, Andy ? What was the end ?"

"Hot in here," said Andy. His face was taking on the mauve pallor of one who has been fathoms deep for too many hours.

"It won't be long now," the youth assured him. "I think our old boy is going to spend a couple of torps. on the German, but he's biding his time. We'll run upstairs any minute now."

"I just hope the Cap. doesn't forget all about us. He doesn't need air." The others regarded Andy with grave agreement. They believed the legend that their captain existed by some form of internal force.

"When I turned in the blizzard was still around, and so was the overcast, for you couldn't see a star. Still feeling sorry for the boys on the upper bridge, I fell asleep."

The heralding click made everyone hold on to the nearest fittings involuntarily. This time it seemed that the supposed dud had joined its voice to that of a live charge which had fallen a second or two later. The ship was assailed by quivering sound from both sides. A sliver of glass fell from the clock-face and cracked at Andy's feet.

"I woke up to feel a darned sight sorrier for myself than for the Cap. Our cabin was at an angle, and the whole ship was filled with a grinding noise, like the inside of a windmill."

"Run down ?" exclaimed the youth.

"Run down. I got the fright of my life. Grace didn't know how deadly serious it was. Women never do, you know.

"We put on some clothes and reached the deck somehow. I don't mind telling you that my shirt stuck to my back. The people were a mixed lot and behaved like wild animals which had just escaped from a circus. The ship had a fearful list, and they made it worse by disobeying the Old Man's orders. Half the lifeboats could not be lowered. Gosh, was I frightened ? I can't tell you what it was like. You stood on a piece of deck like the bottom of a hill, and felt it giving under you—not all at once, but bit by bit—sometimes slowly, sometimes suddenly, but always going. The lights went out. The passengers howled like wolves. There was nothing all around us but the flares and the sea. It was a filthy night, too.

"I got Grace on to the stretch by the No. 4 lifeboat, but she wouldn't go in. Said she'd rather drown with me than without me. It was just as well, for the boat overturned before it touched the water."

"Tch ! Tch !" exclaimed his hearers.

"If the *Morengaria* hadn't been passing that way, we'd have gone down like so many stones, but she answered the signals in record time, and saved 60 per cent. We went down, you know."

"What about the ship that rammed her ?"

"A coal boat. She had her nose broken, but got back to port under her own steam."

"Tch !" repeated the audience.

The signal to rise and fight dispersed them. Fixing their thoughts on the task of the moment, the crew of the *Glowfish* raised the cripple from her bed and forced her to periscope depth.

There was no time to spare for admiration and amazement at this feat. Indeed, the credit for it was doubtless due to a gang of workers in Clyde shipyards—now hundreds of miles away.

The water streamed away from the viewer, and framed therein was the German's silhouette, sharp against the background. By this time the *Glowfish's* position was certainly no secret, for although the submarine had not shown herself, the destroyer peppered the surroundings with deadly accuracy. Her reward for such industry was not long delayed. The British ship's last two torpedoes were delivered in a tandem-punch which was worked out, almost to the fraction of a second, to strike at the boilers.

In the pause between delivery and destination, the submarine men did not speak, except to say, after a fair interval, "I think the first one's missed."

The second made up for this miscalculation. A surging roar, distant yet strangely penetrating, was unmistakable.

Without pausing to admire the view, the men tackled the pumps, manœuvred the ship through the bottleneck leading to the outer world, and fell back into the hazardous routine which had been their lot since the war started. When the Captain circulated the information that a live shell was probably lodged somewhere in the superstructure, they took it as a matter of course, and there were volunteers willing to remove it instantly.

"I don't fancy crossing the North Sea in its company," agreed the Captain. "We'll get rid of it now."

The *Glowfish* broke surface into a tranquil night. A current of fresh air revived Andy, who went back to the galley.

On their way to the deck his erstwhile hearers passed the galley door, and sent out two parting shots.

"It served you right for travelling on a Hun raft," said the torpedo-man. "I've always had a horror of being run down in some pesky passenger craft myself. It's enough to keep you awake in your bunk—the very idea !"

"I would not risk my neck !" declared the youth.

He followed his senior into the upper reaches—to see if there was any truth in the rumour about the live shell.

THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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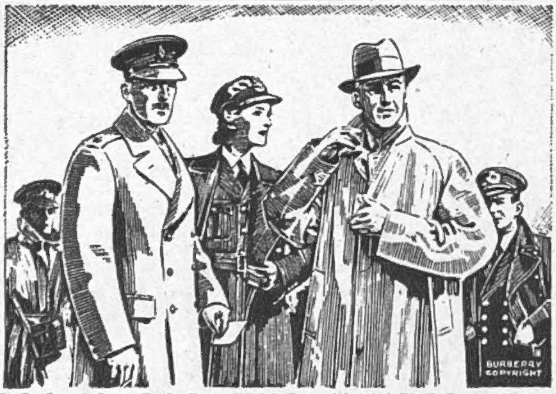

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